The Academic Background of Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R).

The Twelve Renowned Jurists amongst the Sahaaba τ

From amongst the Sahaaba τ there were twelve personalities who concentrated their efforts in Islaamic jurisprudence (Fiqh). These were:

1. Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ.
2. Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b τ.
3. Hadhrat Abu Dardaa τ.
4. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ.
5. Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit τ.
6. Hadhrat Ali τ.
7. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ.
8. Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari τ.
9. Hadhrat Jaabir τ.
10. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ.
11. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ.
12. Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ.

Amongst these Sahaaba τ, there were some whom Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) had permitted to issue Fataawaa (Islaamic rulings) even during his lifetime. People were allowed to act on these Fataawaa.

1. Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said about him: "Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ has the most knowledge pertaining to halaal and haraam." [Tirmidhi]. After the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth, he also acknowledged the necessity of Fiqh. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) granted Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ permission to exercise his faculty of reasoning with regard to matters of Deen (Ijtihaad).

During his term as Khaleefa, Hadhrat Umar τ preserves this status of Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ, and would tell the people, "Whoever wishes to learn Fiqh should go to Mu'aadh τ." [Tadhkira, Vol.2 Pg.20]. According to the majority of Sahaaba τ, a Muslim cannot inherit from the estate of a non-Muslim. However, Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ and Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ were the only two who disagreed with this ruling,

and maintained that a Muslim can inherit from a non-Muslim. Nevertheless, every jurist will be rewarded for his deductions.

2. Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b τ

He was the best Qaari amongst the Sahaaba τ. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said, "Ubayy bin Ka'b τ is the best Qaari amongst them [the Sahaaba τ]." Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b τ used to perform the Taraaweeh salaah during the lifetime of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) as well. He was even appointed as the Imaam of the Taraaweeh salaah during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar τ. [As Sinf, Vol.2 Pg.165]

Imaam Abu Dawood (A.R) reports that Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b τ used to lead people through twenty rakaahs (in Taraaweeh)." Imaam Tirmidhi (A.R) says that narrations only report Hadhrat Umar τ and Hadhrat Ali τ to have performed twenty rakaahs Taraaweeh. [Vol.1 Pg.99]

3. Hadhrat Abu Dardaa τ

He was one of the four Sahaaba τ who memorised the entire Qur'aan during the lifetime of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam). He was a renowned jurist and Qaadhi (magistrate) of Shaam. He issued a ruling (Fatwa) to the effect that a Muqtadi (person performing salaah behind an Imaam) need not recite any Qiraa'ah. He mentioned that the recitation of the Imaam sufficed for the Muqtadi as well. [An authentic narration of Nasa'ee, Vol.1 Pg.106]

4. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ

He was regarded as the highest authority of the Qur'aan after the four righteous Khulafaa. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ frequented the home of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) so often that Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari τ mentioned that they thought he was a member of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam)'s family. Hadhrat Umar τ also acknowledged that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ was proficient in Fiqh and Ahadeeth. Therefore, he appointed Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ to be the leading authority of Ahadeeth in the newly occupied region of Iraq.

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said that the person who desires to recite the Qur'aan as if it was just revealed, should recite according to the recitation of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ. the books of Ahadeeth are filled with Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam)'s praises for Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ. Only a person guilty of bid'ah will ever criticise a noble personality like him. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said, "If I was to appoint a deputy without any consultation, I would appoint Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ."

Hereunder are a few of his rulings:

1. He never raised his hands to his ears when going into Ruku or when standing up from Ruku. An authentic hadith of Nasa'ee (Vol.1 Pg.158) states that he only raised his hands to his ears once during salaah (when beginning). Thereafter, he never raised them again during the salaah.
2. He was also of the opinion that Islaamic rulings can be based on the statements of the learned predecessors and on the deductions of reasoning (Ijtihaad) when a matter cannot be conclusively resolved by a study of the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth [Nasa'ee Vol.2 Pg.260]. Therefore, he was not amongst those who believed that, after the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth, they do not require anything else (Fiqh).
3. He greeted Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) by shaking (whilst using) both hands. [Bukhari Vol.2 Pg.926]

5. Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit τ

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) mentioned that Hadhrat Zaid τ excelled the other Sahaaba τ in knowledge and virtue. When he rode a camel, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ used to walk holding the stirrup. He passed the Fatwaa that the Musallli should neither recite Surah Faatiha nor any other Surah with the Imaam. [Muslim Vol.1 Pg.215]

6. Hadhrat Ali τ

- He was of the opinion that is Sunnah for men to fold the hands below the navel in salaah. [Abu Dawood]
- He was of the opinion that the Taraaweeh comprises of twenty Rakaahs. [Tirmidhi Vol.1 Pg.99, Bayhaqi Vol.2 Pg.495]

- He issued the Fatwaa that the Eid and Jumu'ah salaahs cannot be performed in villages. [Musannaf of Abdur Razzaaq Vol.3 Pg.167, Ibn Abi Shayba Vol.1 Pg.439 – this narration is authentic].

7. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ

He regarded three Talaaqs (divorces) in one sitting to be three. When a person issued a thousand Talaaqs at once, Hadhrat Uthmaan τ said that the woman is separated with three Talaaqs. [Fat'hul Qadeer Vol.3 Pg.330, Zaadul Ma'aad Vol.2 Pg.259]. Although there was a period of discord between Hadhrat Uthmaan τ and Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ, the two were eventually reconciled. A testimony to this reconciliation was when Hadhrat Uthmaan τ led the Janaazah (funeral) salaah when Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ passed away.

Hadhrat Uthmaan τ was opposed to liberal thinking and believed that the Muslims owed their prosperity to the fact that they followed in the footsteps of their predecessors. He once mentioned, "You people have achieved what you have because of emulation. Never let the world sway you from your affairs." [Tareekh Ibn Jareer, Vol.5 Pg.45]

When he was appointed as the Khaleefa, an undertaking was taken from him that he would strictly follow Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ and Hadhrat Umar τ and would not change what they implemented. When Hadhrat Ali τ became Khaleefa after Hadhrat Uthmaan τ, he also did not change anything that his predecessors had implemented. These illustrious personalities saw nothing wrong in emulating the ways of their predecessors.

Haafidh Ibn Hazam (A.R) writes, "Thereafter Hadhrat Ali τ assumed the post of Khilaafah. He neither altered a single law implemented by Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ Hadhrat Umar τ or Hadhrat Uthmaan τ, nor did he annul any of the pacts they made." [Al-Fasl, Vol.4 Pg.97] Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ stated that Hadhrat Uthmaan τ had never committed any major sin as far as they knew. [Kitaabut Tamheed wal Bayaa, Pg. 184/5 – Beirut print]

8. Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari – Abdullaah bin Qais τ

He was amongst those Sahaaba τ who migrated from Makkah to Abysinnia. Hadhrat Umar τ appointed him as the governor of Basrah,

and he was also the governor of Kufa when Hadhrat Uthmaan τ was martyred. Hadhrat Ali τ nominated him to be the arbitrator from his camp when the warring Muslim factions entered into an arbitration. Thereafter, he returned to Makkah, where he passed away during the 54th year after the Hijrah.

Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari τ has reported the hadith wherein Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) instructed the Muqtadi to remain silent while the Imaam recited the Qiraa'ah. Imaam Muslim (A.R) reports this hadith from Hadhrat Is'haaq bin Ibraheem, who reports from Hadhrat Ibn Jareer (A.R), who reports from Hadhrat Sulaymaan Taymi (A.R), who reports from Hadhrat Qataada (A.R), who reports from Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari τ, whose words are quoted from Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam). Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) says, "Remain silent when the Imaam recites." Imaam Muslim (A.R) says that he regards this hadith to be authentic. [Vol.1 Pg.174]

It has been reported from Hadhrat Abu Hurairah τ that the person who misses the Surah Faatiha recited by the Imaam has missed a great good. Imaam Maalik (A.R) reports that he said, "Whoever loses the recitation of Ummul Qur'aan (Surah Faatiha) has indeed lost a great good." [Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik, Pg. 29 – Egypt print] He did not say that the person who misses the recitation of Surah Faatiha has lost the salaah or should recite it himself. He was therefore of the opinion that the Muqtadi should not recite Surah Faatiha.

9. Hadhrat Jaabir bin Abdillah τ

Hadhrat Jaabir τ passed the Fatwaa that Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) referred to the person performing salaah alone when he said that salaah which cannot be made without Surah Faatiha. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) did not refer to the Muqtadi when he said this. Salaah will be in order when a Muqtadi does not recite Surah Faatiha. [Tirmidhi, Vol.1 Pg.42 and Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik, Pg.105]

Based on this statement of Hadhrat Jaabir τ, Imaam Ahmed (A.R) [who was the Ustaadh (teacher) of Imaam Bukhari (A.R)] issued the ruling that the person performing salaah by himself is referred to in the hadith: "There is no salaah for the one who does not recite Faatihatul

Kitaab i.e. Surah Faatiha". [Tirmidhi Vol.1 Pg.42] Hadhrat Sufyaan bin Uyayna (A.R) has issued the same Fatwaa.

10. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ

The student of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ, Hadhrat Mujaahid (A.R) says, "I performed salaah behind Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ and he never raised his hands except for the first Takbeer (Tahreema)." [Tahaawi, Vol.1 Pg.110 – the hadith is authentic].

Therefore, he never raised his hands when proceeding into Ruku. On the other hand, certain narrations report that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ used to raise his hands when proceeding into Ruku. Haafidh Ibn Hajar Asqalaani (A.R) reconciles the two narrations by saying that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ sometimes raised his hands and sometimes did not [Fat'hul Baari, Vol.4 Pg.140]. This proves that the Sahaaba τ did not regard this act to be an emphasised Sunnah. It was therefore not their constant practice.

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar τ also said, "When any of you perform salaah behind an Imaam, the recitation of the Imaam is sufficient for him (i.e. he will not have to recite any Qiraa'ah himself). However, if he performs salaah on his own, he will have to recite." [Mu'atta Pg.107]

He also mentioned that the Maghrib salaah is the Witr salaah of the day. [Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik Pg.110] Therefore, like Maghrib, the Witr salaah will also comprise of three consecutive rakaahs with Tashahhud (sitting posture) after the first two.

11. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ

He enjoys a high status amongst the Sahaaba τ. According to him, three Talaaqs (divorces) issued at once will be regarded to be three Talaaqs. Therefore, his Fatwaa was not that which is reversed in a narration of Muslim. The narration of Muslim pertains to a woman whose marriage was not yet consummated. [Nasa'ee, Vol.2 Pg.83]

12. Hadhrat Ameer Mu'aawiya τ

He was privileged to be a scribe of Qur'aanic revelation. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ (whom Hadhrat Umar τ ranked amongst the veterans of Badr) acknowledged that Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ was a jurist and a Mujtahid. [Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.531]

Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ used to write both the Qur'aan, as well as the letters of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam). Hadhrat Hasan τ handed over his rule to Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ, thereby making Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ the undisputed Ameer of the entire Ummah at that time. Hadhrat Hasan τ and his brother Hadhrat Husain τ both took the pledge of allegiance at the hands of Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ. They both also accepted the allowances that he stipulated for them.

Jihaad has been referred to as the pinnacle of Deen. If there was anything above the status of Jihaad, it would be Fiqh i.e. attaining a deep understanding of the matters of Deen. Allaah says in the Qur'aan, **"All the believers should not proceed simultaneously. Why does a small group from every large party not proceed to attain a deep understanding in religion so that they may warn their people when they return to them, that they may beware?"** [Surah Tauba verse 122].

This verse describes the essence of Islaamic jurisprudence as attaining **"a deep understanding in religion".** Whenever a clear ruling cannot be found in the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth with regard to a certain matter, recourse will have to be made to Islaamic jurisprudence.

The Qur'aan has outlined the way to acquire Fiqh as **"If they had referred the matter to the messenger and those of them who have understanding, then it would surely be known to those of them who have insight."** [Surah Nisaa, verse 83]

The Qur'aan has also mentioned the different ranks of the men of knowledge. Verse 11 of Surah Mujaadalah, **"Allaah will raise in many ranks those of you who believe and those who are given knowledge."**

Those men of knowledge who have an extremely deep insight into the matters of Deen are regarded as men of authority in the field. They will therefore have to be followed. Allaah says, **"Oh you who believe, obey Allaah, obey the messenger and those in authority from you."** [Surah Nisaa, verse 59]

Therefore, the following three have to be obeyed:

1. Allaah.
2. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam).
3. Men of authority.

This can simply be mentioned as following the teachings of:

1. The Qur'aan.
2. The Ahadeeth.
3. Fiqh.

These are the three sources of a Muslim's knowledge.

The Academic Status of Kufa in Islaam

In the world of Islaam, Kufa is the city that is referred to as the "City of knowledge". The famous Shafi'ee scholar, Allaama Nawawi (A.R) writes, "Kufa is the famous city, place of virtue and home to eminent scholars, which Hadhrat Umar τ built." [Commentary of Muslim, Vol.1 Pg.185]

Hadhrat Qataadah (A.R) mentions that over a thousand Sahaaba τ settled in Kufa [Kitaabul Kuna wal Asmaa, Vol.1 Pg.174, and Fathul Qadeer, Vol.1 Pg.91]. Hadhrat Umar τ dispatched Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ to Kufa for the religious guidance of the residents. His student, Hadhrat Alqama bin Qais (A.R) succeeded him as the beacon of knowledge. Although Hadhrat Alqama (A.R) was not a Sahaabi, he was so proficient in the knowledge of Islaam that many Sahaaba τ inquired religious rulings from him.

Thereafter, when Hadhrat Ali τ arrived in Kufa, he said, "May Allaah have mercy on the son of Ummu Abd [Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ], for he really filled this city (Kufa) with knowledge." The Book, "Al Qamoosul Muheet" says that Kufa was the dome of Islaam." [Vol.3 Pg.199]

Of the seven famous Qurra of Islaam, Imaam Hamza, Imaam Aasim and Imaam Kisaa'ee (A.R) all hailed from Kufa. The renowned Judge Hadhrat Shurayh (A.R) was also a scion of Kufa. Imaam Bukhari (A.R) says, "I cannot count the occasions on which I travelled with the Muhadditheen to Kufa and Baghdaad." [Muqaddamah Fat'hil Baari, Vol.2 Pg.450] If Kufa was not a seat of knowledge, it would not have been necessary for the eminent Muhadditheen to travel there.

The "Allaama of the Taabi'een", Imaam Shaa'bi (A.R) hailed from Kufa, as did Allaama Ibraaheem Nakha'ee (A.R) and Imaam Masrooq (A.R). There were more Huffaadh of Hadith in Kufa than there were in all the other Islaamic regions (one may refer to the book "Tadhkiratul Huffaadh" to see the count of these Huffaadh).

All the Ulema of Kufa were unanimous that a Musalli should not raise his hands when proceeding into Ruku and when standing up from Ruku. Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri (A.R), who is referred to as "Ameerul Mu'mineen fil Hadith" ("The leader of the believers in Hadith") was also of the opinion that the hands should not be raised when making Ruku. [Tirmidhi]

The Academic Lineage of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)

- Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa was born in the 80th year after the Hijrah.
- Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abi Awfa τ was still alive at that time.
- Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was thirteen years old when Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ passed away.
- Hadhrat Sahal bin Sa'd τ who passed away in 91st year after the Hijrah was also alive during the lifetime of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R).

- Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) also lived during the lifetime of Hadhrat Waathila bin Asqah τ, who passed away in the 100th year after the Hijrah.

All these Sahaaba τ were living examples of Islaam and the person who gleaned any narrations from them was certainly most fortunate. Although it was not compulsory for any of the Taabi'een to learn from the Sahaaba τ, there was scarcely any of them who did not learn from the Sahaaba τ.

Is it possible to assume that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) did not see Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ perform salaah when the eminent Sahaabi τ came to Kufa? If Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ did raise his hands when proceeding for Ruku and if he did say "Aameen" loudly, why was this not emulated by any of the Ulema in Kufa? People argue

whether Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) narrated any Ahadeeth from Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ, but they fail to perceive that it was impossible for Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) not to glean some practical guidance from the Sahaabi τ.

Although there may be many Sahaaba τ from whom no verbal saying may be narrated, but there cannot be any Sahaabi τ from whom guidance did not spread. This is because the Qur'aan had outlined their duty as **"enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong"**. They also acted upon the command of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) where he told the ummah, "Convey from me even though it be a single verse."

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said, “If Imaan was on the Thurayya (Pleiades) constellation of stars, a man from the people of Persia would find it there.” [Muslim Vol.2 Pg.312]

The various “Muslim” sects that propagated beliefs opposed to Islaam all hailed from Iraq. These include the Jabariyya, Qadariyya, Mu’tazila, Rawaafidh, Khawaarij, Murjiyya and Karaamiyya sects. These were all the horns of Shaytaan that rose in the region. By His grace, Allaah bestowed the area with the successor of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ, whose name was Nu’maan bin Thaabit, better known as Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R). He effectively sealed off the doors that led to these deviant beliefs and penned the cardinal beliefs of Islaam in his book titled “Al Fiqhul Akbar” (“The Greater Fiqh”). In so doing he prepared for the ummah a reliable document of Islaamic beliefs.

The science of Islaamic jurisprudence related to actions is referred to as “Fiqhul Asghar” (“The Lesser Fiqh”), while the science of Islaamic beliefs (Aqaa’id) are referred to as “Fiqhul Akbar” (“The Greater Fiqh”). A prominent Imaam of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, Imaam Tahawi (A.R) (passed away 321 A.H.) compiled “Al Fiqhul Akbar” into a comprehensive book of Islaamic Aqaa’id titled “Aqeedatut Tahawi”. This book is regarded as the best book on Islaamic Aqaa’id in Saudi Arabia.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) is the noble “man from the people of Persia” whom Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) referred to in the above hadith. Although Allaama Jalaalud Deen Suyuti (A.R) was from the Shaafi’ee school of jurisprudence, he clearly states in his book “Tabyeedus Saheefa” that Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) referred to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) in the above hadith. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) hailed from Persia and was responsible for protecting the Aqaa’id of the ummah.

In his book “Al Ikmaal” (pg. 624), the eminent Shaafi’ee scholar Imaam Tabrezi (A.R) attests to the fact that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) possessed extensive in-depth knowledge. Imaam Abu Dawood (A.R), the author of Sunan Abu Dawood writes that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was a true Imaam (leader in his field, dependable scholar). [Tadhkira, Vol.5 Pg.160]

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was a Taabi’ee and met Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ several times. He was 22 years of age when the

Sahaabi, Hadhrat Waathila bin Asqah τ passed away in the 102nd year after the Hijrah. Haafidh Dhahabi (A.R) refers to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) as "Imaamul A'zam" ("The Greatest Imaam") and writes, "He was born in the 80th year after the Hijrah and saw Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ several times when the latter arrived in Kufa." [Tadhkira, Vol.1 Pg.158]

The fact that none of Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ's narrations of Ahadeeth have been reported from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) does not imply that he did not hear any Ahadeeth from Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ. It is obvious that he must have heard Ahadeeth from the noble companion of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) when he sat in his company on many occasions. The reason for which no narrations of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) from Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ have been narrated is because the people of Kufa never transmitted Ahadeeth from people who were under the age of twenty. Therefore, it cannot be said that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) never heard any Ahadeeth from Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ, nor can it be said that he never benefited from the pious Sahaabi τ.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s Knowledge of Ahadeeth.

Although Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was primarily concerned with the principles of Fiqh, extracting rulings from the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth, and compiling these, he also narrated a large number of Ahadeeth. Haafidh Dhahabi (A.R) writes, "Hammaad bin Zaid (A.R) has narrated a great number of Ahadeeth from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)." [Al Intiqaa Pg. 130] The Imaam of Jarh wa Ta'deel [1], Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R) says that Imaam Wakee (A.R) used to memorise all the Ahadeeth of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), which amounted to a large collection. [Al Intiqaa Pg. 150 and Jaami'u Bayaanil Ilm Vol.2 Pg.149]

Therefore, when one is studying a ruling of Fiqh, it will be incorrect to suspect that perhaps Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) never had knowledge of certain Ahadeeth. The Qur'aan declares that such types

[1] The science of authenticating and scrutinising the narrators of Ahadeeth.

of suspicion are sinful. [Mulla Ali Qaari (A.R) in his commentary of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s Musnad]

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s name always appears in the list of Sahaaba τ and Taabi'een (A.R) who were regarded as being particularly notable. Condemning the science of Mantiq (logic), argumentation and philosophy, Haafidh Dhahabi (A.R) writes, "By Allaah! These were never the disciplines of the Sahaaba τ and the Taabi'een (A.R). They were never in the knowledge of Imaams Awzaa'ee, Thowri, Maalik, Abu Haneefa, Ibn Abi Dhib and Shu'ba (A.R). By Allaah! Ibn Mubaarak (A.R) never touched these disciplines, neither did Abu Yusuf, Wakee or Ibnul Mahdi (A.R)." [Tadhkira, Vol.1 Pg.192]

Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R)has classified Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) as a perfectly reliable narrator of Ahadeeth. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ has been described as being "Qaleelul Ahadeeth" ("One of few Ahadeeth"). This does not mean that he did not have knowledge of Ahadeeth, but merely that his nature was such that he (due to caution) did not narrate many Ahadeeth to people. The same applies to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) when the term is used for him. However, the fact is that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) did narrate many Ahadeeth.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) narrated Ahadeeth from eminent scholars of Ahadeeth such as:

- Imaam Ataa (A.R).
- Imaam Naafi (A.R).
- Imaam Abdur Rahmaan bin Hurmuzaan (A.R).
- Imaam Salma bin Kuhail (A.R).
- Imaam Baaqir (A.R).
- Imaam Qataadah (A.R).
- Imaam Amr bin Dinaar (A.R) and many others.

Amongst those who narrated Ahadeeth from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) were:

- Imaam Wakee (A.R).
- Imaam Yazeed bin Haaroon (A.R).
- Imaam Sa'd bin Silt (A.R).
- Imaam Abu Aasim (A.R).
- Imaam Abdur Razzaaq bin Humaam (A.R).
- Imaam Ubaidullah bin Moosa (A.R) and many others. [Tadhkira]

The Muhadditheen (A.R) accept Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s opinion concerning the narrators of Ahadeeth. Haafidh Ibn Hajar Asqalaani (A.R) writes about the narrator Zaid bin Ayaash, "Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) says that he is an unknown narrator." [Tahdheeb Vol.3 Pg.424]

With regard to Hadhrat Ataa (A.R), Haafidh Ibn Hajar (A.R) writes, "Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) says that he has never seen a person better than Hadhrat Ataa (A.R)." With regard to Jaabir Ju'fi, Haafidh Ibn Hajar (A.R) writes, "Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) says that he never saw a worse liar than him." [Tahdheeb Vol.3 Pg.48]

Haafidh Dhahabi (A.R) has accepted the opinion of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) with regard to Rabee'ah and Abuz Zinaad (two narrators of Ahadeeth). Imaam Bayhaqi (A.R) writes that when Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was asked about Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri (A.R), he commented, "I shall certainly record the Ahadeeth he narrates except for the narration of Hadhrat Ali τ which Abu Is'haaq (A.R) narrates from Haarith; and the narration of Jaabir Ju'fi." [Kitaabul Qiraa'ah Pg. 134]

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s View of the Ahadeeth.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) said, "I conclude rulings from Allaah's Book. If I do not find it there, I derive them from the Sunnah of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam); otherwise from those narrations that have become widespread through reliable narrators. If I still do not find anything, I chose from the rulings of the Sahaaba τ … However, when a ruling on the matter proceeds only from other Mujtahideen like Ibraheem Nakha'ee, Allaama Sha'bi, Hasan Basri or Ataa (A.R), then I exercise my personal judgement just as they did in their times." [Al Intiqaa Pg. 30 and Tahdheeb Vol.1 Pg.451]

The above statement makes it clear that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) regarded himself to be equally qualified as Imaam Ibraheem Nakha'ee (A.R) and Allaama Sha'bi (A.R). It was a practice of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) that he would always study narrations pertaining to a particular subject in conjunction with other narrations and Qur'aanic verses that were associated. If any narration was found to be inconsistent with the overall viewpoint, he would classify it as being "Shaadh" (rare/an exception). This was his personal terminology. [Al Muwaafaqaatush Shaatbi Vol.2 Pg.26]

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was so concerned about practising on the Ahadeeth that he would give preference to weak Ahadeeth over Qiyaas (analogical deduction). [I'laamul Muwaqqi'een Vol.1 Pg.88]

When advising his son Hammaad to be particular about five Ahadeeth, Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) told him, "I have selected these from five hundred thousand Ahadeeth." [Al Wasiyya Pg. 65] This proves that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) had an in-depth knowledge of some 500,000 Ahadeeth.

When narrating a hadith from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), the famous Muhaddith, Abdur Rahmaan Al Muqri (A.R) used to say that he was narrating from the king of kings in the subject of Ahadeeth. [The Tadhkira of Khateeb Baghdaadi, Vol.13 Pg.245]

The testimony of these figureheads in the science of Ahadeeth make it clear that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was regarded as a Muhaddith of the highest calibre, as well as an esteemed analyst in the field. If he was deficient in this field, renowned Muhadditheen like Imaam Abu Yusuf and Ibn Mubaarak (A.R) would have never been so devoted to his lessons.

The Excellence of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s Knowledge

Hadhrat Mas'ar bin Kudaam (A.R), who passed away 115 years after the Hijrah, was a great scholar. Hadhrat Yahya bin Sa'eed Qattaan (A.R) says that he never saw anyone with more dependable knowledge than Hadhrat Mas'ar (A.R). Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (A.R) writes that truly reliable scholars are the likes of Imaam Shu'ba and Mas'ar (A.R). The same Hadhrat Mas'ar bin Kudaam (A.R) has the following to say about Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R): "I was a student of hadith along with Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), but he excelled ahead of us. When we took to abstinence (piety) he outstripped us, and when we studied Fiqh he produced what you see." [Al Intiqaa Pg.27]

Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak (A.R) says that whenever Hadhrat Mas'ar (A.R) saw Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) he stood up in respect and would sit before the Imaam with the utmost honour for him. The above testimony of Hadhrat Mas'ar (A.R) attests to the high status that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) held with regard to Ahadeeth.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)'s Repute in Academic Circles

Imaam Layth bin Sa'd Misri (A.R) was a scholar of great distinction. Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R) says that he walked with more Ahadeeth than Imaam Maalik (A.R). He was also extremely influential in the Egyptian government. The same Imaam Layth (A.R) said, "Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) was a greatly celebrated personality in academic circles and I was very eager to meet him. I eventually met him in Makkah when I noticed a group of people falling head over heels for him. When I heard someone shout "Abu Haneefa!" I understood that this must be Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R). My desire to meet him could then not be restrained." [Manaaqib Thalaatha by Imaam Dhahabi (A.R), Pg. 22]

Hadhrat Layth bin Sa'd (A.R) was also a great Mujtahid whose school of jurisprudence was followed for centuries. His rulings coincide so much with those of the Hanafi Madh'hab that some historians have even included his name in the ranks of the Ahnaaf [plural of Hanafi i.e. a follower of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)]. Nawaab Siddiq Hasan Khan has mentioned this as well.

Chief of the Muhadditheen

Haafidh Ibn Abdil Barr (A.R) quotes the following statement from one of the students of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), Hadhrat Yazeed bin Haroon (A.R), who was himself a renowned Muhaddith. He says, "I have sat before a thousand Muhadditheen to learn Ahadeeth and I have narrated Ahadeeth from most of them. Amongst all of these, there are only about five whom I found to possess the deepest understanding and to be the most pious. At the head of these five is Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)." [Al Intiqaa Pg. 163]

Whenever the Muhadditheen refer to someone as a "Faqeeh", it means that they regard the person to be one who has a deep understanding of the Ahadeeth. Imaam Tirmidhi (A.R) writes, "This is what the Fuqahaa (plural of Faqeeh) have said, and they are most knowledgeable about the meanings of the Ahadeeth."

The Nucleus of Fiqh and Hadith

Imaam Abu Aasim An Nabeel (A.R) reports from Imaam Tahaawi (A.R) that he was once close to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) in Makkah when a large crowd of expert authorities of Fiqh and Hadith were gathered around him. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) asked, "Is there anyone who will tell the owner of this house to grant leave to all these people." [Al Jawaahirul Mudhiyya Vol.2 Pg.256]

This report tells us that the eminent Fuqahaa and Muhadditheen frequently referred to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) to solve various difficulties. Hereunder follows a list of famous Muhadditheen who studied hadith (not the principles of Fiqh) from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R):

- Yahya bin Sa'eed Qattaan (A.R).
- Wakee bin Jarraa (A.R).
- Sufyaan bin Uyayna (A.R).
- Abdullaah bin Mubaarak (A.R).
- Abdur Razzaaq bin Humaam (A.R).
- Yazeed bin Haroon (A.R).
- Hafs bin Ghayaath (A.R).
- Yahya bin Zakariyya (A.R).

Leading Muhadditheen Accepted the Fiqh of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)

Imaam Yahya bin Sa'eed Qattaan (A.R) was a Muhaddith of the highest calibre who initiated the science of Asmaa'ur Rijaal, which deals with the examination of every narrator of hadith. Great scholars like Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (A.R) and Hadhrat Ali bin Madeeni (A.R) used to stand and verify Ahadeeth with him. It was common amongst the Muhadditheen to discard any hadith that he discarded.

Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R) writes, "I have heard Yahya bin Qattaan (A.R) say, 'I do not speak a word of lie when I say that I have never heard anyone with a better opinion than Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)." Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R) writes further, "In fact, he (Yahya bin Qattaan) followed most of the rulings passed by Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)." [Tahdheeb Vol.1 Pg.50]

The Hanafi School of Jurisprudence is based on Consultation

The distinction of the Hanafi Madh'hab as compared to other Madhaahib (plural of Madh'hab) is that it is not a Madh'hab based on the personal opinions of a particular individual. It is not the compilation

of one man's rulings. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) used to gather a body of approximately forty leading Ulema. After deliberating upon a particular issue at length, a verdict was recorded. If any eminent scholar held a different opinion, his opinion was also recorded. In this manner, the Hanafi Madh'hab was compiled after discussing a vast range of matters.

When the Fuqahaa unanimously agree upon a ruling it will be termed as "Ijmaa". No majority vote can overrule Ijmaa. Qiyaas (analogical deduction) will only be regarded as a source of proof in the Shari'ah when there exists no Ijmaa on the issue. The concept of voting is a Western decision-making innovation which is not practised in Islaamic consultations and conferences. Islaamically, the final decision is not restricted to a majority vote. In this way, it is not a mere weight of numbers that count, but due priority is given to the knowledge of those allowed to decide.

Together with the opinions of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), the Hanafi Madh'hab also quotes the opinions and rulings of his prominent students. This makes it clear that the Hanafi Madh'hab is not the personal opinions of a single person, but a conglomeration of scholastic opinions that have been discussed at length. Such a ruling is referred to as "Zaahirur Riwaayah". There are six books of Imaam Muhammed (A.R) that are regarded as compilations of the Zaahirur Riwaayaat.

The Prominent Students of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R)

1. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak (A.R)

He is one of the most famous students of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) and was one of the teachers of Imaam Bukhari (A.R)'s teacher. Hadhrat Abu Usaama (A.R) refers to him as "Ameerul Mu'mineen fil Hadith" ("The leader of the Mu'mineen in Hadith"). He narrates an authentic hadith wherein Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ once asked some people whether he should demonstrate to them exactly how Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) performed salaah. When he performed the salaah before them, he only raised his hands for the Takbeer at the beginning of the salaah and at no other time during the salaah. [Nasa'ee Vol.1 Pg.117/158]

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak (A.R) was of the opinion that although this narration proves that the hands should not be raised during the

salaah, it does not categorically reject the opinion of those who believe that the hands must be raised.

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Ibraheem Meer Siyaalkoti (A.R) writes that the students of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) all attained high position. Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) was chief justice during his time, while Imaam Muhammed, Abdullaah bin Mubaarak, Imaam Zufar (A.R) and others were exemplary models because of their academic accomplishments. [Ahkaamul Maraam Pg. 55]

Other renowned Muhadditheen who were students of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) included:

- Hadhrat Yahyaa bin Sa'eed Qattaan (A.R).
- Hadhrat Wakee bin Jarraa (A.R).
- Hadhrat Sufyaan bin Uyayna (A.R).
- Hadhrat Yazeed bin Haroon (A.R).
- Hadhrat Hafs bin Ghayaath (A.R).
- Hadhrat Yahya bin Abi Zaa'idah (A.R) and many others.

A perusal through the books of Asmaa'ur Rijaal will reveal what great personalities all these men were. One can then well imagine how great a scholar their teacher was if these mountains of knowledge collected around him!.

2. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R)[passed away in 152 A.H]

His name was Ya'qoob and he was born in Kufa. He remained with Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) for seventeen years. The Maaliki scholar, Haafidh Ibn Abdil Barr (A.R) says that Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R)used to memorise 50 to 60 Ahadeeth in a single lesson and narrated a large number of Ahadeeth. [Al Intiqaa Pg.172]

Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R) as well as Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (A.R) regarded Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) as a reliable narrator of hadith. [Sunan Kubra Vol.1 Pg.247]

He was so renowned as a scholar of hadith that Imaam Muhammed went to him first when he began to study Ahadeeth. Imaam Muzani (A.R) says that Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) followed the Ahadeeth most closely from all the Fuqahaa (A.R). [Al Bidaaya Vol.1 Pg.180]

Imaam Yahay bin Ma'een (A.R) referred to Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) as being most proficient and adherent to the Ahadeeth and the Sunnah. Allaam Ibn Qutayba (A.R) [passed away in 276 A.H] refers to Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) as a Haafidh i.e. one who was a master in Ahadeeth and who memorised a large number of Ahadeeth. He was also extremely proficient on the subject of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam)'s military expeditions and the history of the Arabs.

Ibn Hajar Makki (A.R) quotes that Imaam Abu Yusuf used to say, "Whenever I took a specific liking to any hadith, I used to take it to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R). I soon learned that he had a deeper insight into authentic Ahadeeth than I did." [Ansaab, Vol.1 Pg.29]

The following is recorded in the commentary of Mushkilul Aathaar, "None of his contemporaries could excel him as he was at the apex of knowledge, juridical proceedings and political science. He was the first to write a book about the principles of Fiqh." [Vol.9 Pg.201] Amongst his writings were Kitaabul Aathaar, Kitaabul Amaali and Kitaabul Kharaaj, which is a canonical work on Islaamic finance. After the demise of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), Imaam Muhammed (A.R) pursued his studies under the tutelage of Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R).

3. Hadhrat Imaam Zufar bin Hudhail (A.R) [passed away in 158 A.H]

He stayed with Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) for twenty years. One of his most outstanding traits was his profound ability to deduce laws from the sources of Shari'ah. He acquired this prowess from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R). Although Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) excelled him in knowledge of Ahadeeth and Imaam Muhammed excelled him in literary talent and knowledge of Arabic, Imaam Zufar (A.R) was second only to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) in Fiqh. It is for this reason that his name often follows that of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) when the Imaam's students are mentioned. [Al Intiqaa Pg. 14]

Whenever Imaam Muhammed (A.R) quoted the ruling of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) in his book "Jaami'ul Kabeer", he also cites the rulings of Imaam Abu Yusuf and Imaam Zufar (A.R). His narration on Ahadeeth are regarded as authentic and reliable. [Miftaahus Sa'aadah Vol.2 Pg.114]

Ibn Hibbaan (A.R) has also classified him as an authentic narrator. [Lisaanul Mizaan Vol.2 Pg.476] The Imaam of Jarh wa Ta'deel [2], Imaam Wakee bin Jarraah (A.R) has narrated several Ahadeeth from Imaam Zufar (A.R). Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) used to refer to him as the Imaam from amongst the Imaams of the Muslimeen.

In his book Mu'jamus Sagheer, Imaam Tabraani (A.R) has narrated a hadith of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), which is transmitted through Imaam Zufar (A.R). After Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) declined the post of chief justice, it was offered to Imaam Zufar (A.R). Imaam Muhammed (A.R) treated him like a teacher and said about him, "He is one of the oceans of Fiqh and amongst the most intelligent men of his time. He acquired a deep understanding of Deen from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) and was one of his leading students. He was one of those people who effectively combined knowledge and action (i.e. he practised on his knowledge). He had knowledge of Ahadeeth and specialised therein."

Abu Nu'aim (A.R) writes, "He was an expert of hadith. When I used to present Ahadeeth to Imaam Zufar (A.R), he would tell me which hadith abrogated another and which one was abrogated; which one was practicable and which was not." [Siyar A'laamun Nubalaa Vol.8 Pg.38]

4. Hadhrat Imaam Muhammed bin Hasan Shaybaani (A.R) [passed away in 189 A.H]

He was an embodiment of the knowledge of Hadith, Tafseer, Fiqh and Arabic. Besides narrating from Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), he also narrated Ahadeeth from the following eminent scholars:

- Hadhrat Mas'ar bin Kudaam (A.R) [passed away in 155 A.H].
- Imaam Zufar (A.R) [passed away in 158 A.H].
- Imaam Awzaa'ee (A.R) [passed away in 157 A.H].
- Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri (A.R) [passed away in 161 A.H].
- Hadhrat Maalik bin Dinaar (A.R).
- Hadhrat Imaam Maalik (A.R).
- Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R).

[2] The science of authenticating and scrutinising the narrators of Ahadeeth.

The Mu’atta of Imaam Muhammed (A.R) is comprehensive and concise version of the Mu’atta of Imaam Maalik (A.R). Hadhrat Abu Ubaidah (A.R) says that he never found anyone possessing more knowledge of the Qur'aan than Imaam Muhammed (A.R). Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma’een (A.R), who was the teacher of Imaam Bukhari (A.R) says, “I copied the “Jaami’us Sagheer” of Imaam Muhammed (A.R) from Imaam Muhammed (A.R) himself.

Allaama Mubarrad (A.R) acquired his qualification in the Arabic language from Imaam Muhammed (A.R). Once when Allama Mubarrad (A.R) used the word “Al Ghazaala” for the sun, he was asked for a reference. In reply he stated that Imaam Muhammed (A.R) used the word in this context. [Usoolus Sarakhsi]

The Ulema of Arabic linguistics rate Imaam Muhammed (A.R) as the Seebaway [3] of his era. His comment on the Arabic language is regarded as a proof in lexicography. He is regarded to be the architect of the Hanafi Madh’hab and is termed “Th Imaam of all Imaams”. He documented the Zaahirur Riwaayah in six volumes. Amongst his compilation of Ahadeeth are Kitaabul Aathaar, the Mu’atta of Imaam Muhammed and Al-Hujjah ala Ahli Madinah (in two volumes).

The Book “Mizaanul I’tidaal” has the following to say: “Muhammed bin Hasan (A.R) was an ocean of knowledge and Fiqh.” [Pg. 50] Imaam Muzani (A.R) writes about him: “Welcome to the one who fills the ears and the heart with understanding.” [Siyarus Sahaaba Vol.8 Pg.473]

Imaam Shaafi’ee (A.R) says, “I have not seen anyone more intelligent, with more insight, more abstinent, more pious, more well spoken and more resolute than Muhammed bin Hasan (A.R).” [Tahdheebul Asmaa] Imaam Shaafi’ee (A.R) also said, “When I used to listen to him recite the Qur'aan, it was as if the Qur'aan was revealed in his language.” [Al Bidaya wan Nihaaya Vol.4 Pg.204] He also commented that Imaam Muhammed (A.R) was one of the most intelligent persons in the world. [Al Jawaahirul Mudhiyya Vol.2 Pg.42]

[3] A linguist who was a noted authority of the Arabic language.

The Ten Distinguished Mujtahideen of the Ummah

1. Imaam Ja'far bin Muhammed (A.R) [passed away in 148 A.H]

Hadhrat Imaam Ja'far Saadiq (A.R) was the grandson (daughter's son) of Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ's granddaughter, Hadhrat Asmaa τ. He was born in the same year as Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) viz. 80th year after the Hijrah. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) stated that he had never met a Faqeeh greater than Imaam Ja'far bin Muhammed (A.R). [Tadhkira Vol.1 Pg.146]

Since all Fuqahaa are considered to be the siblings of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) in the field of Fiqh, the above accolade is certainly noteworthy. Imaam Ja'far (A.R) studied under the following eminent scholars:

- His father, Imaam Baaqir (A.R) [passed away in 114 A.H].
- Hadhrat Urwa bin Zubair (A.R).
- Hadhrat Imaam Ataa (A.R).
- Imaam Naafi (A.R).

The following were some of the prominent scholars who narrated Ahadeeth from him:

- Imaam Maalik (A.R).
- Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri (A.R).
- Hadhrat Sufyaan bin Uyayna (A.R).
- Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R).

The above proves that Imaam Ja'far (A.R) did not hold any beliefs that were contrary to those of the above scholars. Imaam Ja'far (A.R), Imaam Baaqir (A.R) and Imaam Zainul Aabideen (A.R) were all Sunnis. Therefore, the narrations of these personalities are found in many books of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah.

Imaam Ja'far (A.R) made the following statement about Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ: "You are 'Siddeeq' (Most truthful). If a person does not regard you as 'Siddeeq', Allaah should not make him realise any of his ambitions in this world and in the Hereafter. [Kashful Ghumma Pg.220]

2. Imaam Sufyaan Thowri (A.R) [passed away in 161 A.H]

He used to lecture in Kufa and his school of thought was followed till the fifth century. Imaam Shu'ba (A.R) and Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R) referred to him as "The Leader of the Mu'mineen in Hadith". Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak, Yahya bin Sa'eed Qattaan and Wakee bin Jarraah (A.R) were amongst his students. He never raised his hands when proceeding for Ruku and when rising from Ruku. With regard to this act, Imaam Tirmidhi (A.R) writes, "Such was the practise of many men of knowledge from amongst the Sahaaba τ and the Taabi'een, as well as Sufyaan Thowri (A.R)." [Vol.1 Pg.35]

When such an eminent scholar did not raise his hands, it proves that the Sahaaba τ did not generally carry out this practice. He also stated that it is best to recite "Bismillah" silently during salaah. [Tadhkira] He was also of the opinion that the Taraaweeh salaah consists of twenty rakaahs. Imaam Tirmidhi writes, "Most men of knowledge are in agreement with what has been narrated from Hadhrat Ali τ, Hadhrat Umar τ and other companions of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) i.e. that Taraaweeh should be twenty rakaahs. This is also the opinion of Imaam Sufyaan Thowri (A.R). [Vol.1 Pg.79]

3. Hadhrat Imaam Maalik (A.R) [passed away in 179 A.H]

He was one of the most prominent Mujtahideen who lectured in Madinah. He was the teacher of great personalities like Imaam Muhammed (A.R) and Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R). According to the Maaliki Madh'hab, the hands are not raised when proceeding into Ruku and when rising from Ruku. He has written: "We never perform the Witr salaah as a single rakaah. None in Madinah ever performs a single rakaah of Witr. The Witr salaah is only three rakaahs." [Mu'atta, Pg.47]

He was not of the opinion that a Muqtadi should recite behind the Imaam. He stated, "When any of you perform salaah behind the Imaam, then the Qiraa'ah of the Imaam will suffice for him." [Mu'atta Pg.31]

4. Imaam Awzaa'ee (A.R) [passed away in 157 A.H]

He used to be referred to as the Imaam of the people of Shaam. [Al Bidaaya Vol.1 Pg.115] This makes it evident that the people of every

region followed a particular Imaam. Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan bin Mahdi (A.R) says that there was none in Shaam who was more knowledgeable of the Sunnah than Imaam Awzaa'ee (A.R). [Tahdheeb Vol.6 Pg.240]

He also had a large following in Spain [Al Bidaaya]. After meeting Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R), his heart was cleared with regard to the Imaam. He later stated, "The excellence of this man has made others envious of him. Without doubt, my suspicion was wrong, which I have deep regrets about." [Seeratun Nu'maan Pg.45]

Like Imaam Maalik (A.R), Imaam Awzaa'ee (A.R) was also of the opinion that the Muqtadi should not recite any Qiraa'ah behind the Imaam. Haafidh Ibn Qudaama (A.R) writes: "There was Maalik (A.R) amongst the people of Hijaaz, Thowri (A.R) amongst the people of Iraq and Awzaa'ee amongst the people of Shaam. None of them ever made the statement that a man's salaah is nullified if he does not recite Qiraa'ah when his Imaam is reciting." [Al Mughni Vol.1 Pg.564]

5. Imaam Laith bin Sa'd Misri (A.R) [passed away in 175 A.H]

He used to lecture in Egypt and was greatly impressed by Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R). In fact, his analysis of Islaamic rulings coincide with those of the Ahnaaf on so many occasions that the historian Ibn Khalikaan (A.R) has referred to him as being a Hanafi. [Al Jawaa'irul Mudhiyya Vol.1 Pg.416] Allaama Qastalaani (A.R) and Nawaab Siddeeq Hasan Khan (A.R) have also termed him as a Hanafi. [Ittihaaf Pg.237]

His school of jurisprudence was followed until the fourth century of Islaam. Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R) regarded him to be a greater Faqeeh than Imaam Maalik (A.R). When the Madh'hab of Imaam Layth (A.R) began to fade, Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R) was extremely grieved and blamed the students of Imaam Layth (A.R) for being complacent and failing to propagate the Madh'hab. [Tadhkira] Imaam Layth (A.R) was extremely proficient in Tafseer, Fiqh and Arabic.

6. Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R) [passed away in 204 A.H]

He was an Imaam and a Mujtahid on his time. He used to lecture in Makkah and in Egypt. The book "Tadhkira" says that he wrote a camel's load of knowledge from Imaam Muhammed (A.R). Without authenticating him, Hadhrat Yahya bin Ma'een (A.R) casually stated

that there is no harm in transmitting the Ahadeeth that Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R) narrates. However, Imaam Ahmed (A.R) has declared him to be authentic.

According to Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R), only the Imaam should say "Aaameen" loudly, while the Muqtadi should recite it silently. [Kitaabul Umm] No authentic hadith proves that the Sahaaba τ ever said "Aameen" loudly. When he was asked about the number of Rakaahs for Taraaweeh, he replied, "I have found the people of our city Makkah performing twenty Rakaahs." [Tirmidhi Vol.1 Pg.99]

7. Imaam Is'haaq bin Raahway (A.R) [passed away in 238 A.H]

He was the teacher of Imaam Bukhari and Imaam Muslim (A.R). His school of jurisprudence was also followed for a while. Imaam Tirmidhi (A.R) quoted his opinion on various rulings together with those of other Mujtahideen, which proves that he was amongst the leading Fuqahaa.

8. Hadhrat Imaam Ahmed biun Hambal (A.R) [passed away in 241 A.H]

The religious scholars of Saudi Arabia all follow the Madh'hab of Imaam Ahmed (A.R). He was a student of Imaam Abu Yusuf (A.R) and Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R), while Imaam Bukhari and Imaam Muslim (A.R) were amongst his students. He stated that the hadith "There is no salaah for the one who does not recite Faatihatul Kitaab i.e. Surah Faatiha", refers to the salaah of a person performing salaah by himself. It does not apply to the Muqtadi (person following the Imaam). [Tirmidhi Vol.1 Pg.42]

This makes it clear that Imaam Ahmed (A.R) gave no regard to the additional words of some narrations of the same hadith, which constrain one to apply the hadith to the Muqtadi as well. This is particularly so because people like Muhammed bin Is'haaq and Naafi bin Mahmood are amongst the transmitters of such narrations.

Both, Hadhrat Imaam Abu Haneefa (A.R) and Imaam Ahmed (A.R) approved of the meaning behind the hadith: "My Sahaaba τ are like guiding stars". Therefore, they both regarded the words of the Sahaaba τ to be a viable source of law. They both also gave priority to "weak" Ahadeeth over their personal analogy (Qiyaas), and they were both of the opinion that it is not necessary to recite Surah Faatiha when one if following an Imaam in salaah.

9. Hadhrat Imaam Muhammed bin Isma'eel (A.R) [passed away in 256 A.H]

He was a Mujtahid on his own even though Ulema have classified him as a Shaafi'ee because many of his famous rulings correspond to those of Imaam Shaafi'ee (A.R). The Saheeh Bukhari is the gleaming sun amongst all the books of Ahadeeth. The Ahadeeth are arranged in accordance to the chapters of Fiqh and are so comprehensive that no match can be found before it. It was afterwards that Imaam Tirmidhi (A.R) and Imaam Nasa'ee (A.R) followed this precedent.

The chain of Ahadeeth that the Shias have is altogether different and they have their own books of Ahadeeth. The Ulema know well that they have nothing as authentic and comprehensive as this. Although the Saheeh of Imaam Muslim (A.R) contains all relevant Ahadeeth in one place, as well as all the chains of narrators of a particular hadith in one place, the Saheeh of Imaam Bukhari (A.R) is still regarded as the emperor because of the perspective of Fiqh that it contains and because of the extreme authenticity of the narrations.

If any book of Ahadeeth had to compare with the Saheeh of Imaam Bukhari (A.R) in terms of Fiqh, it would be the Sunan of Imaam Abu Dawood (A.R) and the work of Imaam Tahaawi (A.R).

- Imaam Bukhari (A.R) regarded three Talaaqs (divorces) issued in one sitting to be nothing less than three Talaaqs. [Bukhari Vol.2 Pg.791]
- He also never performed less than three Rakaahs of Witr salaah. In support thereof, he quotes one of the learned scholars of the past as saying, "I have seen people performing three rakaahs of Witr salaah ever since I came of age." [Bukhari Vol.1 Pg.135].
- He was of the opinion that people should greet each other using both hands.

10. Hadhrat Imaam Muslim (A.R) [passed away in 261 A.H]

According to the Muslims of Northwest Africa, the Saheeh of Imaam Muslim (A.R) is higher in rank than the Saheeh of Imaam Bukhari (A.R). However, the Ulema of the Indo-Pak subcontinent maintain that the Saheeh of Imaam Bukhari (A.R) is still the best. Without taking the name of Imaam Bukhari (A.R), Imaam Muslim (A.R) rectified certain errors that Imaam Bukhari (A.R) had made by stating what was correct.

Although Imaam Muslim (A.R) did collect all relevant Ahadeeth in one place and arranged them in perspective, he did not arrange them in chapters. He also had no intention of substantiating any particular Madh'hab with his compilation.

Although Imaam Muslim (A.R) was a Shaafi'ee, he narrated and authenticated the hadith wherein Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said, "When the Imaam recites (Qiraa'ah in salaah) then be silent." [Muslim Vol.1 Pg.174]

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Translated Edited by : Mufti Afzal Hoosen Elias
1424/ 2003